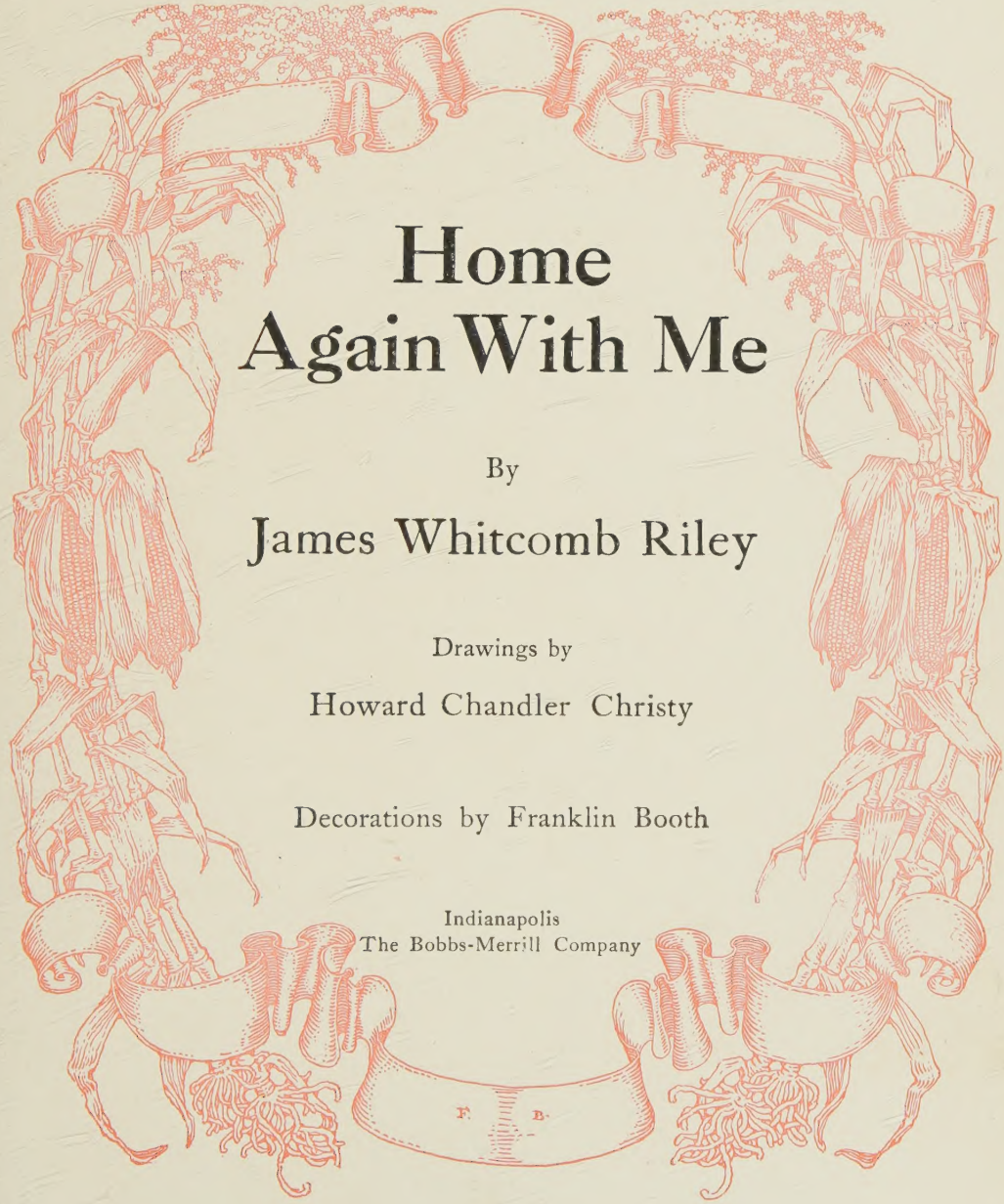
HOME AGAIN WITH ME

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

ILLUSTRATED BY

HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

Howard Chandler Christy



Home Again With Me

By

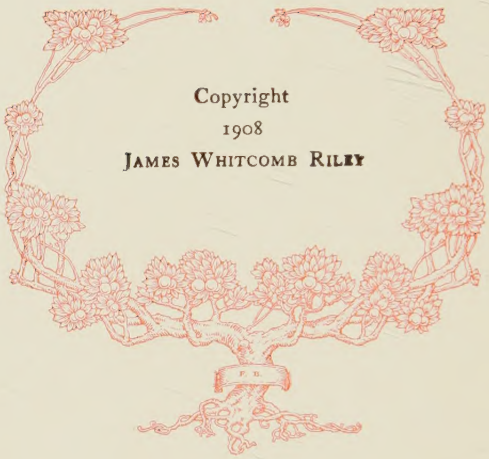
James Whitcomb Riley

Drawings by

Howard Chandler Christy

Decorations by Franklin Booth

Indianapolis
The Bobbs-Merrill Company



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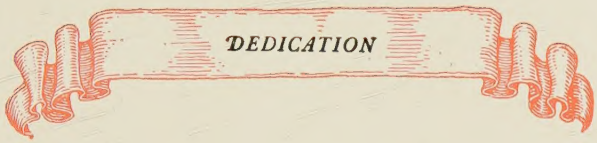
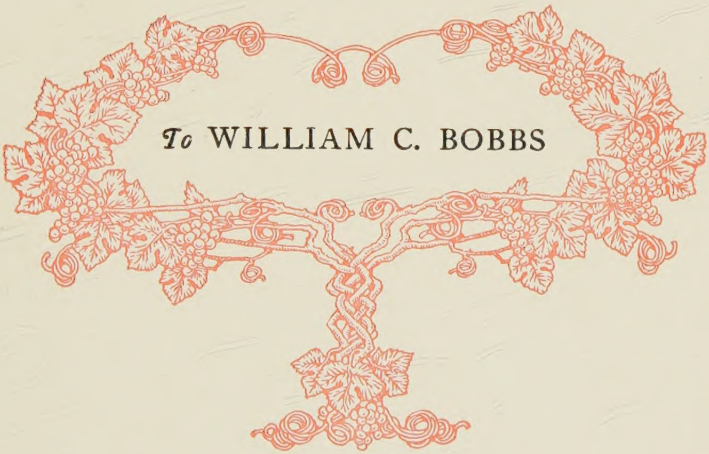
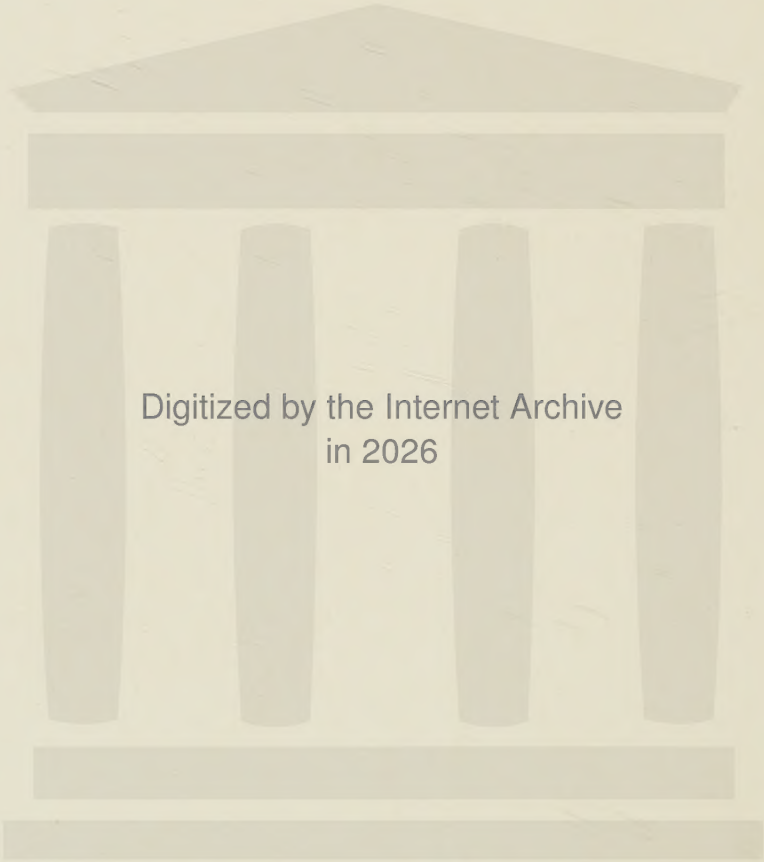




HIS LOVE OF HOME

"As love of native land," the old man said,
"Er stars and stripes a-wavin' overhead,
Er nearest kith-and-kin, er daily bread,
A Hoosier's love is for the old homestead."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Home
Again With Me

I'M a-feelin' ruther sad,
Fer a father proud and glad
As *I* am—my only child
Home, and all so rickonciled!—
Feel so strange-like, and don't know
What the mischief ails me so!—

Fer a father proud and glad
As I am—my only child

'Stid o' *bad,* I ort to be
Feelin' good *pertickerly*—
Yes, and extry thankful, too,—
'Cause my nearest kith-and-kin,
My Elviry's schoolin' 's through,
And I' got her home ag'in—
Home ag'in with me!

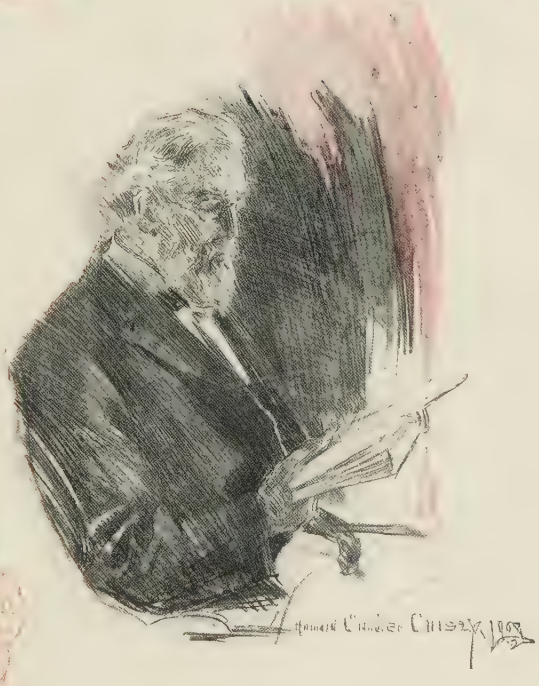
Howard Chandler Christy 1902

My Elviry's schoolin' 's through,
And I' got her home ag'in—

Same as ef her mother'd bin
Livin', I have done my best
By the girl, and watchfulest;
Nussed her—keerful' as I could—
From a baby, day and night,—
Drawin' on the neighberhood
And the women-folks as light
As needsessity 'u'd 'low—
'Cept in "teethin'," onc't and fight
Through black-measles. . . . . .

Same as ef her mother'd bin
Livin', I have done my best

Don't know *now*
How we ever saved the child!
Doc *he'd* give her up, and said
(As I stood there by the bed
Sort o' foolin' with her hair
On the hot wet piller there)
"Wuz no use!"—And at them-air
Very words she waked and smiled—
Yes, and *knowed* me. And that's where
I broke down, and simply jes
Bellered like a boy—I guess!—



Don't know now
How we ever saved the child

Women claimed I did, but I
Allus helt I *didn't* cry
But wuz laughin',—and I *wuz,*—
(Men *don't* cry like *women* does!)
Well, right then and there I felt
'T 'uz her mother's doin's, and,
Jes like to myse'f, I knelt,
Whisperin' *"I understand."* . . .

Women claimed I did, but I
Allus helt I didn't cry

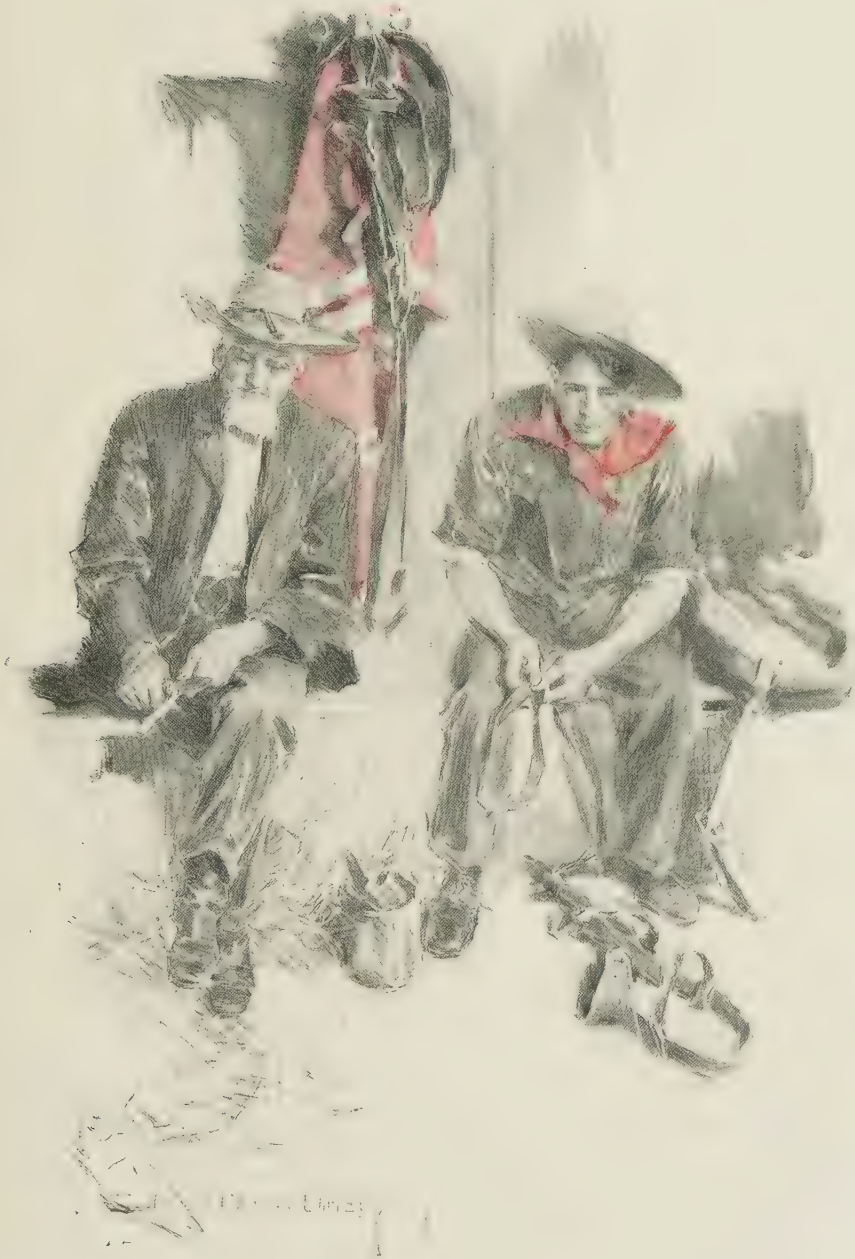
So I've raised her, you might say,
Stric'ly in the narrer way
'At her mother walked therein—
Not so quite *religiously,*
Yit still strivin'-like to do
Ever'thing a father *could*
Do he knowed the *mother* would
Ef she'd lived.—And now all's through
And I' got her home ag'in—
Home ag'in with me!

Yit still strivin'-like to do
Ever'thing a father could

And I' bin so lonesome, too —
Here o' late, especially,—
"Old Aunt Abigail," you know,
Ain't no company;—and so
Jes the hired hand, you see—
Jonas—like a relative
More—sence he come here to live
With us, nigh ten year' ago.

"Old Aunt Abigail," you know,
Ain't no company

Still he don't count much, you know,
In the line o' company—
Lonesome, 'peared-like, 'most as me!
So, as *I* say, I' bin so
Special lonesome-like and blue,
With Elviry, like she's bin,
'Way so much, last two er three
Year'.—But now she's home ag'in—
Home ag'in with me!



Still he don't count much, you know,
In the line o' company

Driv in fer her yisterday,
Me and Jonas—gay and spry,—
We jes cut up, all the way!—
Yes, and sung!—tel, blame it! I
Keyed my voice up 'bout as high
As when—days 'at I wuz young—
"Buckwheat-notes" wuz all they sung.
Jonas bantered me, and 'greed
To sing one 'at town-folks sing
Down at Split Stump 'er High-Low—

Howard Chandler Christy. 1897

Jonas bantered me, and 'greed
To sing one 'at town-folks sing

Some new "ballet," said, 'at he'd
Learnt—about "The Grapevine Swing."
And when *he* quit, *I* begun
To chune up my voice and run
Through the what's-called " scales " and " do-
Sol-me-rays" I *ust* to know—
Then let loose old favor*ite* one,
"Hunters o' Kentucky!" *My!*
Tel I thought the boy would *die!*
And we *both* laughed. . . . .

'Way so much, last two er three
Year. But now she's home again—

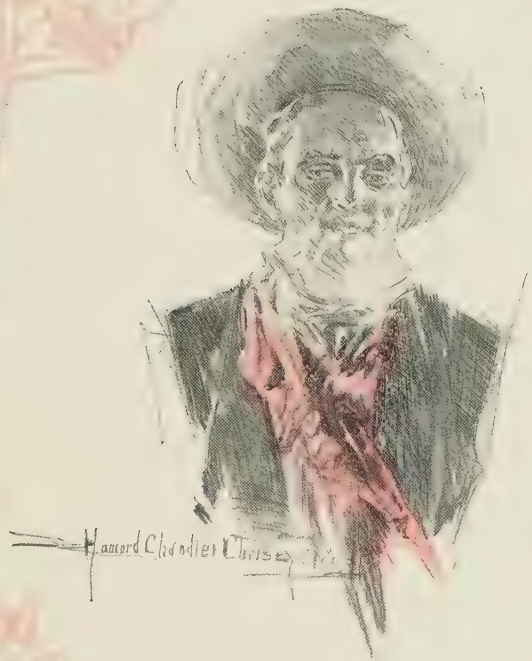
Yes, and still
Heerd *more* laughin', top the hill;
Fer we'd *missed* Elviry's train,
And she'd lit out 'crosst the fields—
Dewdrops dancin' at her heels,—
And cut up old Smoots's lane
So's to meet us. And there in
Shadder o' the chinkypin,
With a danglin' dogwood bough
Bloomin' 'bove her—See her now!—

And cut up old Smoots's lane
So's to meet us

Sunshine sort o' flickerin' down
And a kind o' laughin' all
Round her new red parasol,
Try'n' to git at *her!*—well—like
I jumped out and showed 'em how!—
Yes, and jes the place to strike
That-air mouth o' hern—as sweet
As the blossoms breshed her brow
Er sweet-williams round her feet—

And a kind o' laughin' all
Round her new red parasol

White and blushy, too, as she
"Howdy'd" up to Jonas and
Jieuked her head and waved her hand.
"Hey!" says I, as she bounced in
The spring-wagon, reachin' back
To give *me* a lift, *"whoop-ee!"*
I-says-ee, *"you're home ag'in—*
Home ag'in with me!"

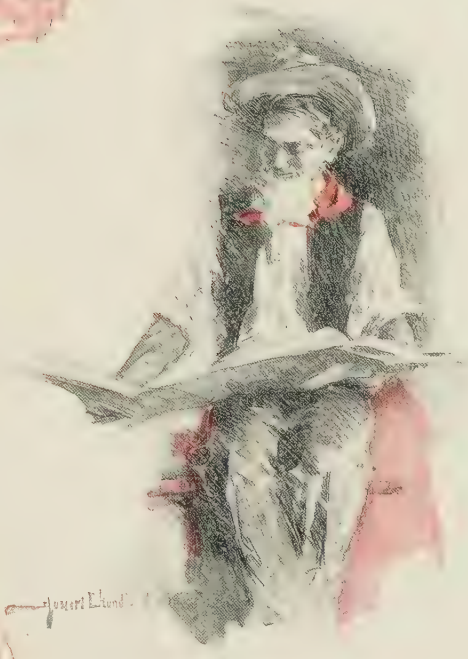


I-says-ee, "you're home ag'in—
Home ag'in with me!"

Lord! how *wild* she wuz and glad,
Gittin' home!—and things she had
To inquire about, and talk—
Plowin', plantin', and the stock—
News o' neighberhood; and how
Wuz the Deem-girls doin' now,
Sence that-air young chicken-hawk
They was "tamin'" soared away
With their settin'-hen, one day?—
(Said she'd got Mame's postal-card
'Bout it, very day 'at she
Started home from Bethany.)

And got back, and goin' to 'ply
Fer school-license by and by

How wuz pro-duce—eggs, and lard?—
Er wuz stores still claimin' "hard
Times," as usual? And, says she,
Troubled-like, "How's Deedie—say?
Sence pore child e-loped away
And got back, and goin' to 'ply
Fer school-license by and by—
And where's 'Lijy workin' at?
And how's 'Aunt' and 'Uncle Jake'?
How wuz 'Old Maje'—and the cat?
And wuz Marthy's baby fat
As his 'Humpty-Dumpty' ma?—

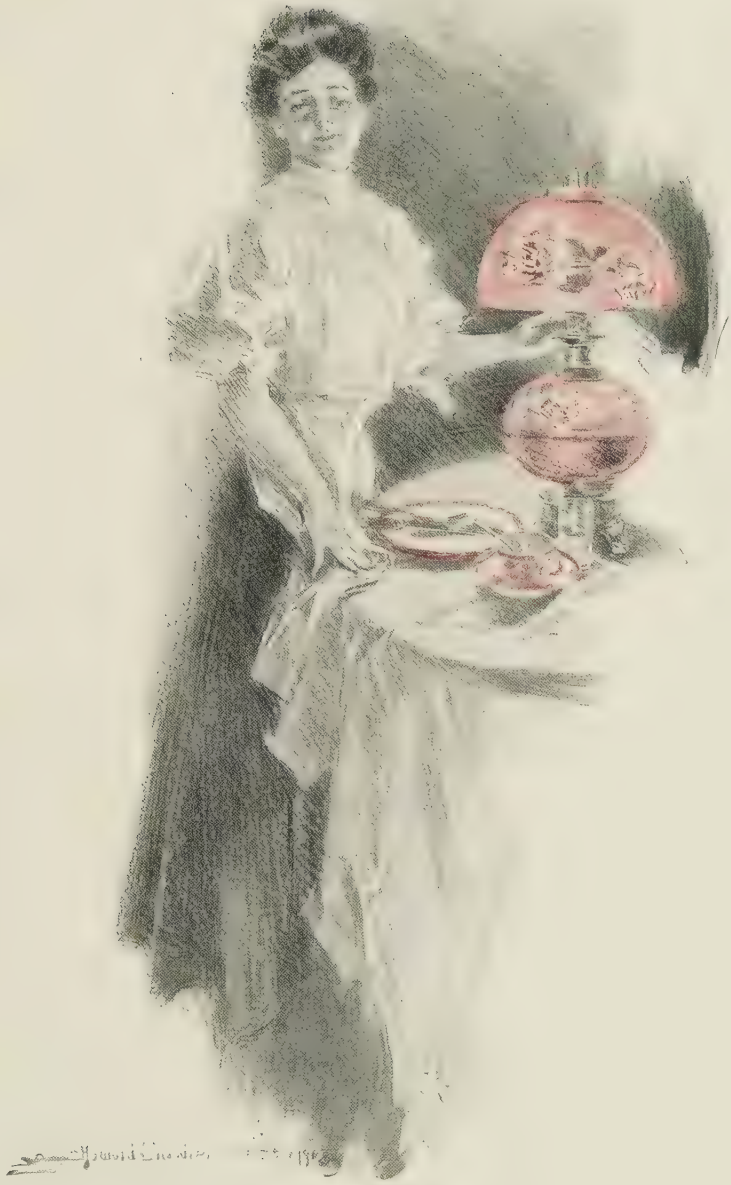


Er wuz stores still claimin' "hard Times," as usual?

Sweetest thing she ever saw! —
Must run 'crosst and see 'em, too,
Soon as she turned in and got
Supper fer us—smokin'-hot—
And the 'dishes' all wuz through.—"
Sich a supper! W'y, I set
There and et, and et, and et!—
Jes et on, tel Jonas he
Pushed his chair back, laughed, and says,
"I could walk *his* log!"

Soon as she turned in and got
Supper fer us—smokin'-hot

And we
All laughed then, tel 'Viry she
Lit the lamp—and I give in!—
Riz and kissed her: "Heaven bless
You!" says I—"you're home ag'in—
Same old dimple in your chin,
Same white apern," I-says-ee,
"Same sweet girl, and good to see
As your *mother* ust to be,—
And I' got you home ag'in—
Home ag'in with me!" . . . .



Same sweet girl, and good to see
As your mother ust to be

I turns then to go on by 'er
Through the door—and see her eyes
Both wuz swimmin', and she tries
To say somepin'—can't—and so
Grabs and hugs and lets me go. . . . .
Noticed Aunty'd lit the fire
In the settin'-room and gone
Back where her p'serves wuz on
B'ilin' in the kitchen. I
Went out on the porch and set,
Thinkin'-like. . . . . .

And see her eyes
Both wuz swimmin'

And by and by
Heerd Elviry, soft and low,
At the organ, kind o' go
A mi-anderin' up and down
With her fingers 'mongst the keys—
"Vacant Chair" and "Old Camp-
Groun'." . . . . . .
Dusk was moist-like, with a breeze
Lazin' round the locus'-trees . . . .
Heerd the hosses champin', and
Jonas feedin'—and the hogs—
Yes, and katydids and frogs—
And a tree-toad, som'er's. . . . . .

Howard Chandler Christy 1905

Yes, and katydids and frogs—
And a tree-toad, som'er's

Heerd
Also whipperwills.—*My land!*—
All so mournful ever'where—
Them out here, and her in there,—
That the whole thing railly 'peared
'Most like 'tendin' *Services!*
Anyway, I must 'a' jes
Kind o' drapped asleep, I guess;
'Cause when Jonas must 'a' passed
Me, a-comin' in, I knowed
Nothin' of it—yit it seemed
Sort o' like I kind o' dreamed
'Bout him, too, a-slippin' in,

Anyway, I must 'a' jes
Kind o' drapped asleep, I guess

And a-watchin' back to see
Ef I *wuz* asleep—and then
Passin' in where 'Viry wuz—
And where, I declare, it does
'Pear to me I heerd him say,
Wild and glad and whisperin'—
'Peared-like heerd him say, says-ee,
"Ah! I' got you home ag'in—
Home ag'in with me!"

Ah! I 'got you home ag'in—
Home ag'in with me!

Home Again With Me

By

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

Franklin Booth

With Illustrations

By

HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY